

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, January 3, 2011

The Center of Clayton - Multipurpose Room C

The following members were present:

Alex Berger	Jessie Hoagland
Mimi Deem	Omri Praiss
Marguerite Garrick	Rosemary Hardy
Judy Goodman	Mark Winings

Excused/Absent

Ira Berkowitz
Brad Bernstein

Also present:

Patty DeForrest
Eric Gruenenfelder
Toni Siering
Susan Renard

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the December 6, 2010 meeting were approved as read.

Addresses from the Audience: No public comments were made.

Director's Report: - Dog Park Survey Summary (Please refer to the attached Dog Park reports for additional information.) Ms. DeForrest reviewed the Dog Park survey summary as well as the Dog Park survey comments report. The overall percentage breakdown, when combining all surveys results were: 19.28% in favor; 7.61% have no opinion; 73.09% opposed. The degree of opposition was stronger among those who received the second mailing with fewer of these respondents having no opinion on the matter. In addition to these results, there were twenty-seven surveys submitted from people who did not reside in either mailing area, twenty-four of which were opposed to the Dog Park. Ms DeForrest reviewed the primary reasons residents and business owners were opposed to a Dog Park in Concordia Park. Concordia Seminary is no longer interested in moving forward with a dog park in the proposed location and has rescinded its offer.

After the results were announced, a few residents asked if the City is looking at possible alternative sites to have a Dog Park. Ms. DeForrest stated that further discussions in reference to this matter would take place at a later time as the Commission is not prepared to talk about alternate sites tonight. The Commission also needs to determine if they will continue discussing Dog Parks.

The Commission gave residents the opportunity to share their ideas about possible sites for a Dog Park. The first site suggested was the south end of Shaw Park. Residents had conducted research of the site and suggested that this location in Shaw Park would be the perfect place for a Dog Park for the following reasons: there are over ninety parking spaces near the South Shelter and only five are used at one time, Clayton residents do not live very close by, it is close enough for town house and condo dwellers to walk, the site is a little under an acre and it is underutilized. Further, the south end is somewhat separated from Shaw Park, and residents looked at this location from the standpoint of those who do not like dogs. It was also suggested to make this site a temporary location to see if it would work. A map with a satellite view of the area which included trees, slopes, and topography was distributed to the Commission by Clayton resident, Mr. Andy Newman.

Ms. Deem said Dog Park research shows that anything under an acre is too small. She also stated she felt that if Clayton cannot have a Dog Park that is well-built, then the City should not move forward with the project. One resident did not see a need for the site to be more than an acre based on other Dog Parks visited. Ms. DeForrest reiterated the fact that the City did research to find what the best management practices are at Dog Parks, and found that designing a park smaller than one acre often creates a mud pit. Other things to consider at the Shaw Park site include: Clayton High School usage and the Centennial Greenway trailhead near that location

Ms. Dubin expressed how thankful she is to everyone who came to the meeting. There are 160 supportive families who want a Dog Park in Clayton, but do want to bring it to the right place.

The Master Plan survey results show residents want a Dog Park. The Dog Park committee members said they will take on the job of raising funds for a fence. Ms. Goodman said that in the last citizen survey 45% of

residents were interested in a Dog Park. When Concordia Seminary presented the idea of using allowing the City to use 1.5 acres of land at Concordia Park, it made sense to move forward and explore private land. The question now is: Does the City want to explore putting a Dog Park in other public parks? At this time, a Dog Park is not a City priority; it is not top on the list due to budgetary constraints. Ms. Goodman said the Commission is interested in a Dog Park in the right location.

Mr. Praiss said a lot of research has been done to identify a location for a Dog Park and we continue to be at a dead end because residents do not want a Dog Park in their backyard. Mr. Berger's suggested to Mr. Praiss that the Clayton School District become involved in the exploration of finding alternate sites.

A student stated that he would not want a Dog Park in Shaw Park. He suggested the City should partner with Clayton School District to move the mulch pile behind Gay Field, and have the Dog Park located where the mulch pile is currently located. Ms. DeForrest noted that the Centennial Greenway trail will be built in this area this year. To clarify, the mulch pile is City property; however the other side belongs to MSD.

Ms. DeForrest said Parks and Recreation staff will explore the pros and cons of locating a Dog Park in Shaw Park. She noted that the Dog Park should not be located in Oak Knoll Park because the land is the same as it was over 100 years ago and is a passive, historically significant park. A study was previously conducted about the possibility of having a Dog Park in Oak Knoll Park; the end result was that residents in Claverach Park do not want a Dog Park in their neighborhood.

Hanley Park Final Report – The final Hanley House report becomes an addendum to the Master Plan. The Parks and Recreation Department applied for a grant for a structure at Hanley Park, but has not heard anything at this time. The grant application was completed without a final design; the drawing is conceptual. If the City receives funding for the project, an architect will be hired and a construction plan developed later on in the process.

Oak Knoll Park Detention Basin Project – There are flooding issues on Southmoor and Ridgemoor behind Oak Knoll Park, so the northwest corner of the park (near Ridgemoor) requires a detention basin. Parks and Recreation staff has not met with the architects about this project yet; however, once the meeting is conducted, they will determine if the basin will be man-made or wetlands. The neighbors will have input in the process, as well. Ms. Renard stated that a wetland area is more work than having a pond with a fountain. Engineers from MSD will begin this project in 2013.

There is an RFP for the current location of the Clayton Child Center. The City and the Child Center did not reach agreement on their lease; however they may submit a proposal during the process.

Parks staff is busy planting bulbs, removing trees and planting new ones. Some of the small projects Parks staff will be working on this year include playground resurfacing at Taylor Park, lighting on the front of Hanley House, and the sensory garden in Shaw Park.

Attendance at Shaw Park Ice Rink on News Year's day increased by almost 50% in a four hour time frame.

Everything is in line with finances so far this year.

Old Business / New Business: The Commission discussed how to go about exploring the possibility of a Dog Park only on the west side of Shaw Park. Some Commission members believe it is important to take a leadership role in determining an appropriate location for a Dog Park, and this is definitely something they need to continue to discuss. It was determined that at the March meeting Ms. DeForrest will present a report put together by staff that will include the pros and cons of having a Dog Park in Shaw Park.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Denise Ucinski